



News from the Hill

The halls at the state capitol will be abuzz once again as the 57th Montana Legislature convenes in Helena on January 3. The legislature will be dealing with a number of important issues this session including "bed tax" and tourism-related legislation. Anna Marie Moe will be back at Travel Montana to assist Travel Director Matthew Cohn with legislative duties. To keep abreast of the most current tourism-related legislation click on Travel Montana's Intranet site at www.travelmontana.state.mt.us. We will also keep you posted on legislative news through the *Update*.

Third Quarter "Bed Tax" Collections Hold Even

Montana's statewide "bed tax" collections held even for the third quarter of 2000. This third quarter report includes the months of July, August and September. Overall statewide "bed tax" collections for the first nine months of 2000 were up 3%. The nine month collections amounted to \$9.3 million compared to \$9 million collected during the same time period in 1999.

Among the tourism regions, Russell Country and Missouri River Country reported

5% collection increases for the third quarter, while Gold West Country and Custer Country reported 2% growth, Glacier Country a 1% increase and Yellowstone Country down 6%.

"We are pleased to see that the "bed tax" figures were not nearly as impacted as they could have been during the fires," said Travel Montana Director Matthew Cohn. "We believe our promotional efforts to inform visitors about alternative travel itineraries throughout the state paid off, especially in Russell and Missouri River countries. However," Cohn explained, "we cannot forget that there are still pockets of the state and individual Montana businesses that were hit hard financially by the fires. We will continue to do whatever we can to ease their burdens. We will continue to actively market Montana so visitors know that our state is open for business in 2001."

In addition to the region's third quarter reports, the communities of Helena, Great Falls, Whitefish, Kalispell and Missoula experienced collection increases. Billings and Butte held even, while West Yellowstone and Bozeman saw collection declines.

Journey to the March Governor's Conference

"2001: The Montana Tourism Odyssey - In Pursuit of Quality" is the theme for this

year's Governor's Conference scheduled for March 26-27, 2001 at Helena's Best Western Colonial Hotel.

The conference break-out session presentations will cover a variety of topics including internet design and marketing, Montana travel trends and issues, cultural and heritage tourism, general and niche marketing, publicity and Lewis and Clark Bicentennial planning.

A registration form and agenda information is listed in the Governor's Conference section of Travel Montana's Intranet site at www.travelmontana.state.mt.us.

A conference registration post card will be mailed out in January. The more detailed registration brochure will follow in February, with a reminder post card to be sent out in early March. The "early bird" registration price of \$120 is available through March 8. To register, contact RMS Management Services of Helena, 406-443-1160, fax 406-443-4614, e-mail: skopec@rmsmanagement.com.

New Faces Around the State

Travel Montana welcomes the following women to their new tourism posts: Delores Tanglen, Executive Director of Custer Country; Rhonda Harms, Director of the Billings CVB; Sue Morris, Executive Director of Yellowstone Country and Cyndi Andrus, Director of the Bozeman CVB. Good luck with your new duties and welcome to Montana's tourism team.

In the Right Direction

The new state highway map will be available at Travel Montana in mid-January. If you are interested in receiving it call our office at 406-444-2654.

Did You Know?

- Travel Montana's Intranet site at www.travelmontana.state.mt.us has the latest news about the legislature, registration forms for the 2001 Governor's Conference, the new marketing plan, the monthly *Update*, research data and more to keep you in the know about Montana's tourism industry.
- The Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research recently completed a report titled "Regional Analysis of Pleasure Travel by Montana Residents," which is available from ITRR. The online version can be accessed at www.forestry.umd.edu/itrr.com. Click on Publications and Information to ITRR Publication List and Order Form to Resident Travel to the report.
- Travel Montana Director Matthew Cohn was appointed to the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) Board.
- The U.S. Board on Geographic Names changed the name of Waterton Lake in Glacier National Park to Upper Waterton Lake.



vs.



A Warm Montana Welcome

The "everyday vs. the grandeur of Montana" is the theme of this year's new Warm Season creative. Up to seven new ads are being created for this campaign including ones specific to Lewis and Clark, western history and culture, outdoor adventure and the active mature market. The new creative will be seen in 50 publications this year with the unique 1/2-page spread design being featured in 1/3 of those publications. Six new publications were added to the plan to help round out the mix of perennial strong performers. This year's circulation will reach 54 million compared to 51 million in 2000.

Unique to the plan this year is a stronger presence in the mass media market including *Parade* and *USA Weekend*. "Mass media has been proven through our conversion studies to be one of our best cost-per-inquiry travel generator vehicles which is both cost-effective and reaches a wide audience," said Consumer Marketing Manager Sarah Lawlor. "Due to widespread national media on the fires we want visitors to know that Montana looks great and is ready to host them in 2001."

In addition to the Warm Season print plan, Travel Montana will be investing more dollars

into a stronger presence on the web through Internet banners, sponsorships and opt-in e-mail campaigns and will increase the very successful cost-per-inquiry television campaign.

Hit the Trail

Lewis and Clark Workshops Scheduled

Three workshops designed to help Montana's farmers and ranchers plan for the upcoming Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Observance are scheduled for February 19-21, 2001. The full-day workshops, "The Corps of Rural Discovery; Lewis & Clark Visitors Among Montana's Ag Community," are scheduled for Monday, February 19, at Wolf Point's Sherman Inn; Tuesday, February 20, at Fort Benton's Ag Museum; and Wednesday, February 21, at Dillon's Western Montana College.

The workshops will provide ag producers information about the educational, economic and networking opportunities offered by the upcoming bicentennial. Presenters at the workshops include representatives from the Montana Stockgrowers Association, MSU Extension, Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission, area farmers and ranchers, travel industry operators and Travel Montana. To register or for more information, contact Travel Montana at 406-444-2654.

Film Office Wraps Up Year

The Montana Film Office had another good year of filming in the state. Montana was home to 18 national commercials, 15 television programs, 14 still shoots, 6 documentaries and 2 feature films. The Darby area was the primary location for the shooting of the feature film *The Flying Dutchman*. The film was produced by Senta Productions and starred Rod Steiger, Eric Roberts and Catherine Oxenberg. The *Slaughter Rule* wrapped principal photography in Great Falls in December. This feature film was co-written and co-directed by two brothers originally from the Missoula area, Andrew and Alex Smith. It is a film about a young man coming of age, which is set amongst the six-man football fields of rural Montana. The film was produced by the Slaughter Rule Partners and stars David Morse. The Montana Film Office is looking forward to a film-filled 2001!

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

Calendar of Events

January

- 24-29 Winter Fam—Glacier and Gold West Countries
- 27-30 American Bus Association (ABA) Convention—Baltimore

February

- 5-6 Tourism Advisory Council Meeting—Bozeman
- 12-18 BIT Trade Show—Milan, Italy
- 19-21 L&C Ag Workshops

For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to Travel Montana's Intranet site:
travelmontana.state.mt.us.



Travel Montana

1424 Ninth Avenue
PO Box 200533
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Helena, MT
Permit No. 20